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**Standards
for
Accrediting and Supervision
of
Secondary Schools
in
Montana**



**Adopted by the
MONTANA STATE BOARD OF
EDUCATION
May 5, 1952**



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Accreditation of Secondary Schools

1. The State Board of Education, by law, prescribes the standards for accreditation of high schools and accredits such high schools as maintain those standards.
2. Schools are classified for accrediting as: Fully accredited, accredited with advice, accredited with warning, accredited on probation, accredited on final or terminal probation, and dropped, or non-accredited.
3. Schools are accredited for a definite number of years or grades of teaching. A high school which is accredited for four years is considered as accredited to teach grades nine through twelve.

4. Terms are defined as follows:

- A. Advice: Advice is given as first notice to a school that it is deficient in meeting any one standard.
- B. Warning: Warning is given as notice of a failure on the part of the school district authorities to correct a deficiency on which it has been advised, or in the case of the violation of two or more standards, without advice.
- C. Probation: Schools violating two or more standards a second year, or a single standard for a third year, are placed on a probationary status, or may be dropped.
- D. Final or Terminal Probation: Schools granted accrediting for the last time, for such reasons as may be considered proper, are given final accreditation.

5. Apportionment of State and County Funds.

Apportionment of State and County Funds shall be made only to accredited high schools according to statute.

6. Acceptance of Units of Credit.

Units of credit earned in high schools that are approved, approved with warning, or on the probationary list will be accepted toward graduation in the high school in which they are earned or in any other high school in the State.

A limited number of high school units, not to exceed one in any one year, can be earned through the State Correspondence School and will be accepted toward graduation in any high school in the state in which the student is enrolled. Taking correspondence work while attending an average high school should not become a regular practice. It is assumed that correspondence work is for the home-bound, incapacitated children, the isolated child or for the child who needs subjects not offered in his high school.

Units earned during any year in non-accredited high schools, will not be accepted towards graduation in any high school in the state.

7. Eligible High School Students.

Refer to School Laws of the State of Montana 1949, (Sec. 75-4228, R.C.M., 1947) Sections No. 1262.79, 1262.81 as amended by Chapter 106, Laws of 1951, (Sec. 75-4230, R.C.M., 1947) Chapter 199 School Laws of the State of Montana, 1949, Section 2, (Sec. 75-3611, R.C.M., 1947).

8. Certificate of Accrediting.

An appropriate certificate signed by the Governor, State Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State High School Supervisor shall be issued yearly to each high school showing the level of accreditation granted by the State Board of Education.

9. Submission of Reports.

Regular annual blanks furnished by the State Department of Public Instruction shall be properly and completely filled out and placed on file with the State Department of Public Instruction. Part A of the high school report should be filed not later than October 10, and Part B not later than June 15.

10. Establishment of District High Schools.

In order to be eligible for accreditation, new district high schools must be approved by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction prior to their establishment. See Section 1262.38 School Laws of the State of Montana 1949. (Sec. 75-4139, R.C.M., 1947).

11. Approval by State Superintendent of Public Instruction for high schools, and courses of study.

See Section 1262.38, (Sec. 75-4139, R.C.M., 1947) Chapter 91; Section 941, (Sec. 75-1311, R.C.M., 1947). School Laws of the State of Montana, 1949.

12. Average Number Belonging.

Two-year high schools will be considered for accrediting provided that there are at least 15 students in Average Number Belonging in grades nine and ten, and who are carrying no classes below the ninth-grade level. Four-year high schools will be considered for accrediting provided that there are at least 25 students in Average Number Belonging, none of whom are enrolled in classes below the ninth-grade level. Borderline high schools may present their case in writing prior to the meeting of the State Board of Education in early March each year, for consideration for accrediting.

13. The School Plant and Grounds, Sanitation, Janitorial Service.

- A. The school grounds must be well-kept and neat in appearance.
- B. The school plant and facilities must be adequate for the number of pupils enrolled and program of studies offered.
- C. The lighting, heating and ventilation of the building, lavatories and toilets, wardrobes, lockers and shower rooms, water supply, school furniture, location of the classrooms, shops and laboratories, and janitorial service must be such as to insure hygienic conditions for pupils and teachers. The lunch room must meet State standards for food-handling establishments.
- D. Provision must be made for the safe-guarding of dangerous power machinery with which pupils come in contact. Proper steps for protecting pupils against injuries must be taken in laboratories, shops, gymnasiums and other parts of the building or grounds where accidents are apt to occur.

E. A high school which has fewer than two recitation rooms, in addition to the study hall and library shall not be accredited. See law on approval of building plans. Chapter 117, Section 1262.73, School Laws of the State of Montana 1949. (Sec. 75-4222, R.C.M., 1947).

14. Science Laboratory.

- A. The laboratory facilities, the size of the laboratory, the equipment, instructional apparatus, materials, supplies, maps and charts, must be adequate to meet the needs of instruction for all those courses involving laboratory work.
- B. Ample provision shall be made for the safe-keeping, systematic arrangement and care of all materials, supplies, and apparatus used in the instructional program. Orderliness will be regarded as essential to good instruction.

15. Records.

- A. Every high school shall keep a permanent record of each pupil's work and attendance. This record shall be kept in a fire-proof vault or safe in the school building. All future school buildings shall be equipped with a fire-proof vault.
- B. For the purpose of adequate guidance, the high school student's record card should be continuous, comparative and cumulative, showing as graphically as possible the complete secondary school record of the student as revealed by teachers' marks, by comprehensive standardized tests of aptitudes and scholastic achievements, and by personal data.
- C. An official transcript (or a certified copy) of the college preparation of each teacher shall be kept on file in the office of the administrative head of the high school.

16. Instruction and Spirit.

The efficiency of instruction, the acquired habits of thought and study, the general intellectual and moral tone of a high school and community-school attitude and cooperation are paramount factors, and therefore only high schools that rank well in these particulars as made evident by thorough, sympathetic administration shall be considered eligible for accrediting.

17. Co-operation of Board of Trustees and Community Spirit.

- A. The working relationships between the Board of Trustees and the administrative head of the system as well as that between the administrative head and the teachers shall be such as to insure efficient and successful administration and instruction in the school. The selection of teachers should be based upon the recommendation of the superintendent of such school. If there is no superintendent, the recommendation of the high school principal, or grade school principal should be considered.
- B. The tenure of teachers, principals, and superintendent shall be an important factor in the accrediting of schools. Excessive turnover in staff members may be interpreted as evidence of lack of cooperative spirit.

18. Preparation of Teachers.

All high schools shall maintain standards respecting certification of teachers, principals, and superintendents, in accordance with the statutes governing certification of teachers and rules and regulations of the State Board of Education.

19. Requirements for Graduation.

- A. The school year shall consist of a minimum of 180 days of actual teaching, exclusive of all holidays and vacations.
- B. Definition of days taught. See 1951 Supplement, Section 2, Chapter 107. (Section 75-3611, R.C.M., 1947).
- C. The minimum length of the recitation period shall be forty-five minutes.
- D. A unit of credit in a course is defined as covering a school year that shall include in the aggregate the following:

Academic subject (without laboratory work) 225 minutes of recitation per week.

Academic and vocational subjects (with laboratory work) 300 minutes per week, divided approximately in the ratio of 140 minutes for recitation and 160 for laboratory work. Subjects requiring no outside preparation, such as typewriting and manual training, 300 minutes per week, plus drill as individual needs may indicate.

- E. Four-year high schools must maintain a minimum of sixteen units for graduation.
- F. Four-year high schools must require and maintain at all times at least four years of English and/or communications, in accordance with the State course of study.
- G. Four-year high schools must require one unit in American History and one-half unit in American Government for graduation. A two-unit course in American History and Problems of American Democracy, which includes Government, may be substituted for this requirement; such courses in American Government should include the study of local and state, as well as national government structure.
- H. Students shall not be graduated from high school (except in unusual cases) with less than four years of work. Schools making a practice of graduating students at the end of the junior year will be placed on the warned list.

20. The Teaching Load.

- A. An enrollment in the high school in excess of thirty pupils to one class period shall be considered a violation of this standard, except in band, orchestra, chorus, physical education.
- B. The minimum number of teachers for a two-year high school shall be two full-time teachers in addition to the superintendent. Such a high school employing the minimum number of teachers shall offer no more than one laboratory science in any one year.
- C. The minimum number of teachers for a four-year high school shall be three full-time teachers in addition to the superintendent. A high school employing but three full-time teachers shall offer not more than two laboratory sciences in any one year.

- D. The daily teaching load per teacher should not exceed five classes, except in those high schools using minimum-length periods of forty-five minutes, in which six classes may be taught. In extreme cases, where permission is granted by the Department of Public Instruction, the addition of one class may not interfere with accrediting.

21. The Pupil Load.

The normal pupil load shall be four unit courses yearly, exclusive of music, health and physical education, and student activities. Only such students as rank in scholastic ability in the upper 25 per cent of the student body may be allowed to take more than four units for credit.

22. Efficiency of Elementary School System.

Especially important are the quality of instruction, the certification of teachers, the number of pupils per teacher, the length of school term and the number of teachers in the elementary grades, as compared with the number of teachers in the high school. No high school shall be accredited unless high standards of work and efficiency are maintained in the elementary schools of the district.

23. The School Library.

A. Personnel.

1. High schools of 800 or more students shall have at least one full time librarian who is a graduate of an approved library course.
2. High schools of 400 to 800 students shall have a part-time teacher-librarian with a minimum of 12 quarter hours of technical library training.
3. High schools of 100 to 400 students shall have a part-time teacher-librarian with a minimum of 9 quarter hours of technical library training.
4. High schools of less than 100 pupils shall have a part-time teacher-librarian with a minimum of 6 quarter hours of technical library training or practical experience.
5. All high schools shall make proper allowance for library assistants, when needed.

B. Books and Periodicals.

1. A catalogued library of 800 live books and sufficient reference materials of recent copyright date should be chosen to serve the needs of the high school.
2. At least 15 periodicals should be chosen to serve school needs and at least one daily newspaper. At least \$400 per year for new books, periodicals, and library books rebound or repaired, in the smaller high schools and \$1.50 per pupil for high schools where enrollment is over 300, is required for budgeting, exclusive of textbooks.
3. Proper allowance will be made for a public library, if there be a good public library in the district. (This does not replace the school library, however.)

24. Guidance and Counseling.

All secondary schools, to receive accreditation, shall provide continuing guidance and counseling facilities for the pupils. Teachers employed for this procedure shall be required to have adequate preparation for such work. Adequate time shall be scheduled to allow teacher time for counseling.

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